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## USU Faculty Senate Minutes, November 30, 2009

Utah State University

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### Recommended Citation

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**USU FACULTY SENATE  
MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 30, 2009  
Merrill-Cazier Library, Room 154**

Ed Heath called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Steve Burr moved to approve the minutes of September 14, 2009. Motion was seconded by Vince Wickwar and carried.

**Announcements**

**Roll Call.** Senators, alternates and guests are reminded to sign the roll call sheet.

**Faculty Forum minutes posted on FS webpage.** Forum minutes are available on the Faculty Senate webpage.

**University Business – President Stan Albrecht, Chief of Staff Sydney Peterson.**

President Albrecht addressed the concerns raised in the Faculty Forum regarding administrators' performance reviews and faculty input on the budget committee. By code all executive officers are subject to a comprehensive review of their performance at least every five years. Provost Coward is entering his fifth year of service and his review will be conducted during Spring Semester and will include input from the faculty.

The Budget Advisory Committee was organized to reflect balance of all employee groups on campus and was co-chaired by Provost Coward and Vice President of Business and Finance Fred Hunsaker. Membership included one vice president, one dean, two members of faculty; one past president of the Faculty Senate and the incoming president of the Faculty Senate, and one staff member. All cuts that were enacted came to the committee from the vice presidents and deans, who were given great flexibility in determining the strategic cuts for their units. The purpose of the committee was four fold;

1. To assess how cuts would affect other units
2. To evaluate the potential impact on revenue opportunities
3. To challenge administrators to be innovative and thoughtful in making cuts
4. To challenge administrators to provide new ideas for strategic investment.

Where there may be concerns about lack of faculty involvement in the process, those concerns are better addressed with individual deans and department heads as all recommendations came to the committee from that level.

Nationwide, higher education is suffering from the effects of the economy. In Utah, the state has lost nearly \$1 billion in revenue from 2007-2010. The rainy day fund has grown to about \$418 million over the last 5 years. These funds will be used once the economy shows signs of growth so as to not deplete the fund completely. New revenue sources, including tax increases, are being considered. Approximately \$180 million in new revenue could be generated by

implementing the sales tax on food, and \$100 million by a motor fuel tax as well as other one-time options. The issue is that the Governor will not approve any increase in taxes.

The faculty and administration of Utah State need to look to the future. The economic turn-around is possibly 5 to 10 years in coming. While the state will likely continue to fund the undergraduate teaching operations of the university at a level that will still allow us to attract a good undergraduate community, many parts of our operation as a research university will not be covered with enhanced revenue. This could include graduate education, graduate student stipends, libraries, advanced computing, research equipment, and salary supplementation for researchers and so on. USU will have to find new solutions to fund these basic parts of our research operations.

Additional grant and contract funding must be secured. The faculty has been very aggressive in this area, submitting 602 proposals compared to 479 at this time last year. Even in a difficult economy the Comprehensive Campaign is moving forward and more announcements are forthcoming. Other possible avenues to increase revenues may be expanding the summer school option as well as evening school and distance education.

Faculty asked if more furloughs are being considered. Furloughs may be considered again, especially if the legislature takes an additional cut of 1-5% in this year's budget.

The CEU draft of the Memorandum of Understanding has been completed and will be posted on the USU webpage.

As a cost saving measure, several traditional holiday events will not be held this year. In their place, Craig Jessop has agreed to present a concert December 18 and 19 and various groups and organizations will be invited to attend as guests of the university.

Chief of Staff Sydney Petersen informed the Faculty Senate of the upcoming Commencement activities. The Graduate Hooding and Commencement ceremony will be Friday, December 11. The procession begins at 1:00 and the ceremony begins at 1:30. The undergraduate ceremony will be Saturday, December 12. Students are to line up in the Field House at 9:30 the procession begins at 10:00 and the ceremony at 10:30. This will be the final December Commencement due to declining participation and budget issues.

### **Information Items**

**Faculty Evaluation Committee Report – Greg Podgorski.** A pilot test is being conducted this semester of the nationally normed IDEA instrument. Advantages to the form are that it is research based, it is field tested, and has been in existence for 30 years. There are a number of published studies on the reliability and validity of the form. This form allows faculty to choose the teaching objectives on which they will be rated. Two scores are provided, a raw score and an adjusted score that factors in uncontrollable elements, such as class size, is the class required or elective, etc. The report results provide specific suggestions for improvement of instruction. Some disadvantages to this instrument are that the results reports are quite complex and the form is substantially longer than the current evaluation. There is also significant increased cost. None of USU's peer institutions use a nationally normed instrument and there are few if any similar universities using this form. [It was later discovered that one peer institution, New Mexico State University, uses the IDEA form.] The committee will conduct focus groups of students to gauge the reaction to this form and will also revisit the issue of moving evaluations online. Pilot faculty and department heads will be contact for their reactions to the IDEA form.

### **Consent Agenda Items**

ASUSU representative Spencer Lee informed the senate that ASUSU will be encouraging students to write their legislative representative concerning the budget impacts on higher

education. He asked that faculty of chosen classes allow a student representative to give a 3-5 minute presentation in class.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

### **Key Issues and Action Items**

**PRPC Code Changes Section 401.3 & 401.4, First Reading – John Engler.** PRPC proposes to eliminate the distinction between resident and non-resident faculty and suggests that role statements should be followed for promotion and tenure issues. The phrase “as determined by professional colleagues” was added in several places for clarification. Senate members question exactly what the phrase means, if it is necessary, and if it is in conflict with other parts of code. John indicated that PRPC also suggested removing the phrase “evidence of scholastic promise” because it is unknown what that means. There was some discussion that in 401.3.4 (1) the phrase role assignment should be changed to role statement. Regarding the rank of extension agents, feedback from Noelle Cockett is that the title of Extension Agent is not used; therefore, PRPC recommends striking this from the code. A number of issues and concerns were expressed that PRPC consider when they bring this section back to the Senate for a second reading.

A motion was made to accept this as a first reading and send it back to the committee for further changes and they will bring it back for a second reading. Motion carried.

**Recommendation to form an Ad Hoc Committee to review university reports of non-adherence to the Faculty Code – Ed Heath.** Ed Heath brought forward a proposal from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that an ad hoc committee be formed. The membership would consist of the Faculty Senate Past President, an elected member from a college of the BFW and AFT committees. The purpose of the committee would be to receive reports of instances where there was non-compliance to the code and then refer it to upper administration for appropriate action. Instances could also be reported to the Faculty Senate President who could then refer it to the ad hoc committee to take forward.

Senate members raised questions as to whether or not this would involve disciplinary action. The feeling is that it would not. It would serve as a nonbinding mechanism of raising awareness and correcting issues without invoking the grievance process. No one would be obligated to report violations. Discussion continued regarding the advantages and disadvantages of an ad hoc committee versus amending the code and creating a new senate committee. Creation of an ad hoc committee could be completed very quickly where as the creation of an official senate committee would not be completed until July 2010.

A motion was made to form an ad hoc committee consisting of the three mentioned individuals to take referrals of possible code violations and report them to upper administration for appropriate corrective action. Mike Parent made a substitute motion to send the issue back to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to draft a written motion to establish an ad hoc committee and bring the issue back to the senate for a vote at the next meeting. Motion with amendment was seconded and carried.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 4:40 p.m.